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Letter from Anne Whitney, Paris, France, to Sarah Whitney and Sarah Stone Whitney, 1876 January 30

Anne Whitney

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Paris Rue & Hotel Jean Bart Jan. 30
1876

My beloved Mother & Sarah - I was
saying to Adeline that one might make
a letter more interesting by recounting
the things we have not seen - as for
instance Versailles - Père la Chaise - Jardin
des plantes - the opera - I cd. go on & call
up your imagination many brilliant things
wh. I wd. advise you to think about - &
from the stone-house of your fancy you
wd. get something so much better than I
cd. describe - that you wd. say - Now
truly we have a Correspondent in Paris.

When one gets into a routine of work, the
brilliant episodes drop out in some un-
accountable way. Thrice last week we
have missed the theatre - one being an
invitation to see Rossi in Rome & Juliet
from wh. we were detained by the prom-
ise to be at home that eve. & callers. But
I went one eve. with Myrtle Greenwood
as Mrs. L. seems to be universally called.
to the opera bouffe - where Schneider
a celebrated opera buffoon performed.
It is a mixture of good music - buf-
foony & some excellent acting. The
last never wanting on the French stage.
Grace G. has been ill with a dreadful
cough since she has been in Paris - & before
too - How she can go about at all is wonder.
But she is spurred by the necessity of
getting her living & her daughters - The mother
whom she has in teaching to not doing much
in toward that end - & her maternal

for home letters on postcard at
the expense of going about whether
she be well or ill. Her daughter
has been studying music here. &
the last of this week or first of next
they go on to Florence. I have written
to Mr. Ball to know if the work-
men will not be ready for me earlier
than the time set - for I shall much
prefer the journey in company with friend
& if I can send the statue down in the Gov-
ship it will be a gain. Feb. also is a
better month than March anywhere on the
globe. The weather has been six charming
mild here. & in the garden when my
studio is, grass & vines are green & birds
sing all day.

John & Carrie's letter came today. So
Mr. Downing's ailment only stupified?
To be sure that is bad enough. But why
you shd. so savagely applaud this not
contributing towards his little Christmas
dream I fail to discern. It is very
amusing. I am sorry to hear of Susan's
ill condition. & trust if she is coming East
again she has something in view. It is
natural she shd. want to get again among
her old intimates. I hope there is some one
among them who for a consideration will
take her in. It is a pity she shd. return
without visiting the western country - ^{advising}
from the city I mean. The going to St.
Louis alone is not a fair trial. She shd.
go & eliminate - but how can she unless

there is some place to go to. I hope
Frank will go there again under bet-
ter auspices than before. Still there
is probably nothing better than Florence
at home. Yes - I saw Mrs. Wright's
death in the paper. I got doubted a
little. thinking it - given the family shd.
have styled her a relict.
Mr. Couture talks of going to Villiers le
bel bef. long. It is quite probable that
ade in order to resume her lessons will
have to go there & stay some time - I
hope she may do so during my absence.
Couture gives lessons to her in installments
\$5 at a time - or in succession. Then her
habit has been to work by herself & when
she has made several pictures to take
them to him. So long as he is in the city
he is not situated so that he can give lessons.
Whether therefore I shall return to this
house seems uncertain. It has the recom-
mendation of being near my studio - not a small
motel - & some intrinsic excellences beside.
I can give no further ^{opinions} at present about
addressing me. Letters are always forwarded
so that the only inconvenience is a little
delay. We had a visit - Andy Eng. from
Mr. & Mrs. Schroeder & Miss Gerstein &
French English lady who works there & whom
we much like. Mr. S. sends with the French
contribution a statue called L'art. Uniquely
wh. was at the Salon last Spring. It rep-
resents a boy sitting & holding at arm's
length a vase on wh. he has just created

some of those Etruscan groups than
have been on view. It is a pretty thing
& the French Gov't having taken it
sufficiently to give him the marble & make
it with. He had hoped they wd buy it.
But they did not. I hope it will sell
in Phil^a. Mr. S. is a good artist - & is
having I judge a pretty hard time - but
the family has a resource - in the good
old grandmother Mrs. Pein who sup-
ports them with taking boarders.
It is an admirable state of affairs
for the artist world here. That the
best works exposed at the Salon are
generally bought by Gov't. & even some-
times to help & encourage artists. Whose
works are not wholly desirable the Gov't
will purchase from them & these last
are sent to a place of deposit in the
environs & when some French City
& piece of statuary is wanted for the
adornment of grounds or building - it is
taken from this depot - while the
best works are kept for the Galleries
& grounds of Paris. The Gov't pays
not a great deal - but every artist
prefers to sell to it - because it gives
prestige. The juris wh. decide upon
the merits of works are composed
of two thirds artists. Look at
this picture & then on that presented
at home when artists are left at the
mercy of incompetent tubercles - when
there is not enough knowledge to ensure
a modicum of conscience. For believe

I can comment I will tell on you
with pleasure.

It was all right - about Mr.
Morrison & the book - it will be
soon enough when I see him again.

There was no need, if you
had known - wh. I do not by your
letter discover - to tell me who
wrote that article to the Phil.
Press. I think I can't be mistaken -
it is the hand that has helped
before - & does with energy when
it does at all. This is the way
Mr. F. has taken to waking up
opinion - & it is a very good way.
How did it come to you? I fear
some one wd send it - to the Boston
Post, or the Herald - as a street
from the Phil. Press! Either of
these journals is stronger & popularly
speaking, than the Ad. whose
independence on them that can
certain persons is sold, but
I don't read this to any of our Waterman
neighbors. Mrs. F. has really a great
deal to do. It is difficult for one who
lives outside of the wheel to understand
how absorbed those in it become - how
impossible for them to command their
time of Mrs. F. has greatness that
of time. Living is not one - & you can
appreciate the lengthenings of the

stroke. that Mr. F. (if Lyndes might
but it must not be hinted at) has
given when he has dared to use the
word "ring" in connection with the
names of men whom he is always
meeting at clubs & elsewhere.

It is best if you want to commu-
nicate with Mrs. F. so long as she
has this Centennial business on hand -
to write. She is also she wrote me
working with all her might to interest
Boston in the condition of the poor
of certain parts of the city. & she
writes that it may destroy her bef-
it begins to be apparent that any-
thing is doing - or words to that effect.
Maudy A.M. What you say about Kate
makes me uneasy till I hear again.

If, if only Mr. Lambert's plan
might work - give the right thing -
little hope. My letter it seems had
not been recd. when you saw her.

The afflictions of our friends - Aunt
Q. - Anne Hooker - are dreadful
indeed. Don't forget to remember me
with love when you see them - Anne
whining too. I shd think you ought
to sympathize with her if anyone.

For the matters in Q. Russell
et. so what you please. There is nothing
there but the lounge & chair (bamboo) wh.
might not be left there with advantage.

to ourselves.

In answer to Miss Perkins
request - dear Edw. I say. Give her
the shanty & welcome. The cost
of moving it - will be as much as she
ought to pay for it. & I shd. & truly
object to taking anything. I don't think
Mrs. Wright will present any obstacle
to its removal. I drew 30 sh

at Perkins' Friday - & shall be
ready for the bill of 4 - too when
it comes. A will send letters
after me to R.

I know the
names of only 7 of the "Immortals" -
who are they? R. S. H. P. B. D. &
Boston - who are the other 6? Whom
in the Athenaeum is the portrait
& exhibited? & why so silent - don't
you like it - any of you? Letters
from Florence say the marble work
goes on "splendidly". Mr. B. is
very busy I judge. He is making a
statue in a chamber of his house
& probably the other of S. in his
studio.

Now a word as to our disciples
Sat. night - Mr. Walter Cook our
spirited young architect went with us
to the opera. Of the beauty & the lack
of it in that great palace I can not
profitably write. Catherine says he finds
the architecture "affreux". & if it ^{seems} _{seems}

4
to me not so. An opinion of such
weight must be considered. The
sets in a private box just above the
parquet. These boxes are rooms elegantly
furnished in the back part of which one
may sleep or dance or eat ice-creams
the house is only cognizant of the am-
chairs which occupy the front. & when
in general ladies sit with their "red
achievments" their white gloves & red-
slippers. Between the acts who feels
like it goes out in what is called
the foyer. & promenade. This is the
great environment of the Theatre
warm & brilliant - & with costly mosaic
floors & statues & gilded ceiling.
The crowd there was not handsome ac-
cording to the flesh - however well-ap-
parelled. The great entrance halls.
(I cannot describe for you - I do not
begin at the beginning). The enormous stair-
ways are very imposing. The opera
was Don Juan where immortal music
is married to the mortals of valderrada
& immortality. Blame not Paris. I have
seen the same in Paris Boston. who
hears Don Giovanni as often as a scholar
& who of course means only music. But
~~except there~~ there is an edifying ending where
Don Juan is disposed of in a cloud of brimstone
which is as sweet as heaven in the nostrils
of the fat-dames who sit complacently
applauding. But the ballet - how
to tell you of this crowing green of this
French stage! Like clouds of butterflies
like flowers that have been physiced out
of their beds - like colored snow
& flowers.

5 hold up my pen! do not make
a fool of me. Adeline is whirled off
of her senses by the ballet. Also the
music & the gay all made for us
a memorable evening.

Yesterday PM 12^{1/2} found us
at the Contours. who with us went
to the Gaité. to see the Bourgeois
Gentilhomme. We were a party
of 7 including the two young daughters
who had never been to the Theatre
& the handsome bonne - a domestic
of middle age whom the family
treat as a friend & whose white
bonnet cap was a ravishing cli-
max to her toilette. At this performance
there is much fun descending from
what Mr. Buffon says wh. called down
the stinging of the great artist
who says that Molière is broad
genial but never a buffoon. Here
again we had the enchanting ballet
& a great deal of it. After the play
we went home with ~~our~~ our friends
took of their cordial & bouillon. I got
home just in time for our dinner.

This again was a memorable evening
worthy of a good day - even
the Lord's. When I see you all
I can give you some idea perhaps
of these French people (the Contours)
who are so simple & kind in their
ways. who have one something
new - so plainly living - so highly
thinking.

My next letter will be 2 or 3

3 days later I suppose. no matter
the next Pioneer will be earlier.
I must tell you with me a happy
journey. 2 on the strength of it - she
finds it so. Best-love from us
both. to dear Mother & friends
all. If Photo. looks color send
to Carry a picture of the R.A. to
compensate her for having been touched
in that tender spot.

Today there is a snow storm.
the roof is covered. but I think

I am very glad to hear of Florie's
probable marriage in April. It is
time that matter were concluded.

I trust law-making proves an
agreeable occupation. Now & where
came the Doubtful of Cranberry Creek
is applied to your district I wonder.

Can Hon. Center or corner is familiar
but Cranberry is having any connection
beyond that? since I do remember.

Mr. Jarvis has written a letter to the
American Rep. in Paris praising the
Boston com. for initiating a fair mode
of getting good works of art. & also
praising Mr. Ball's model. "We can
readily believe" he says "the authority
of Boston art culture that the model
presented by Mr. B. was the best offered."
Mr. J. means by this to commend
the com. If you might be in doubt as
I tell you. The little babble of words
will go on. It isn't worth thinking about
any more. There is only one thing to do as

the end of the world is coming